

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, August 20, 1878, with transcript

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL TO MABEL (Hubbard) BELL Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin.

Tuesday, Aug. 20th, 1878. My sweet darling May:

It is such a comfort to me after a hard day to find a nice refreshing letter from you awaiting me at my hotel. I am afraid you must be disappointed at my late scribbles — but I find that I cannot write a long letter after being hard at work from before breakfast until one o'clock in the morning. I can only give you a skeleton outline of my doings. Sunday afternoon had a very pleasant time at Lord Gough's. Monday I was at the Association from 10 o'clock until 3 P. M. listening to stiff papers and occasionally taking part in discussions. In the afternoon found one of a party who drove down to Kingston for the purpose of examining the new Ironclad recently purchased from the Turkish Government. It arrived in Kingston yesterday. Spent the whole afternoon on board, and reached Dublin again only in time for a hasty dinner — and then dressed for Prof. Dewar's lecture. After lecture talked science at the hotel with a select party of Professors — and Prof. Sylvanus and I kept it up till nearly one o'clock.

This morning I commenced by hearing a paper in the Chemical Section on the microphone as a means of detecting the diffusion of gases. Took part in discussion. Was then entrapped into the Department of Physical Science by the electrical titles of some of the papers — and had to sit for more than half an hour listening to a paper “On Cubic Surfaces referred to a Ponted of Cotangential Points!!!” However this 2 was followed by other papers of an interesting character and in the discussion of which I could take part. In the afternoon Mr. William Bottomley made his appearance and shared my room as a dressing room for the Bell Lions. Dinner and speeches kept us until quite late. After dinner Mr. Preece and a telegraphic party came up to my bedroom and investigated the telephonic

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apparatus — and discussed electricity — and after they left Prof. Sylvanus Thompson and I retired to the smoking room and talked right-angled theories and electrical and magnetical doctrines till a few minutes ago. It is now half-past one o'clock so please don't be disappointed by this mere scribble. I have been so busy today as to have forgotten to obtain note paper and it is too late to get any here so please excuse the paper.

I forgot to say that I was aroused this morning by the news that a Roman Catholic Priest wanted to see me. I found the Principal of the D.&D. Institution.

Before he left a lady called whose name I forget. An old friend of my Uncles.

Programme for tomorrow. British Association till 3 o'clock. At. 3:30 after some lunch — Brother Welch is to meet me with all sorts of statistical information covering the D. & D. and we are to go together to visit an Industrial School sustained by the brotherhood. In the evening dine with Dr. Brady. Thursday I join an excursion party to the Vale of Avoca, and to examine some peculiar system of managing orphan homes and other charitable institutions — and to dine with Earl somebody 3 or other.

Yesterday we almost killed a child. If it had not been for the presence of mind of the driver — nothing could have saved the little fellow. Must reserve particulars.

Hope you like your new quarters. The condition of Elsie's arm shows that the vaccine matter did not take the first time.

Excuse the pencil writing. The people here have carried off my ink and it is too late to ring up the porter.

You dear sweet little wife, goodnight. I want to be back and I may run away any time.

With love to my dear Mamma-in-law and to my sister and sister-in-law.

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Your loving husband, Alec. Mrs. A. G. Bell, Upper Norwood.